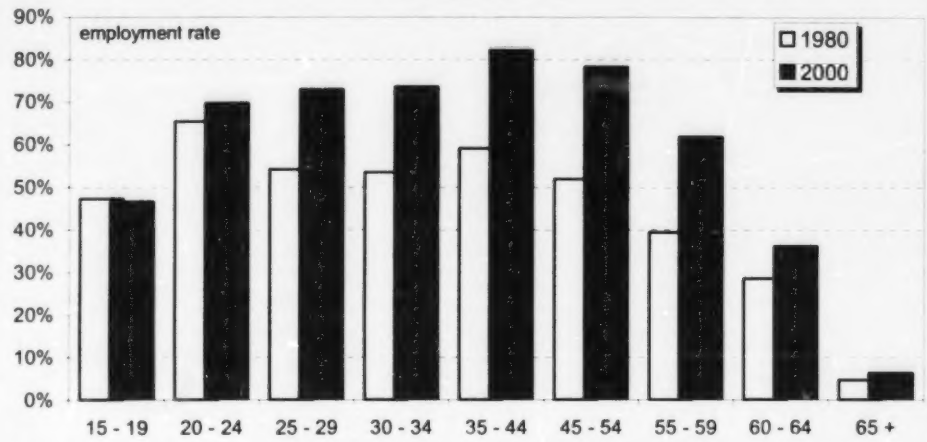
Employment

One of the most profound changes in the last part of the twentieth century has been the large scale entry of women into the paid labour market. This change has occurred in many parts of the world and Saskatchewan is no exception. In the last quarter of the century, the number of Saskatchewan women who had paid employment increased from 135,000 to 221,000. In contrast, the number of men with paid employment was effectively constant over the same period.

By 2000, women accounted for 46% of people with paid employment compared with, for example, 44% in 1990 and 37% in 1980. The increase is because of a continuing trend to higher rates of employment among women in the 25 to 54 age group (see Figure 2). Twenty years ago, women aged 20 to 24 had the highest rate of employment; at the age of 25, women's participation dropped considerably because of child rearing and family responsibilities. Today, women's employment rates remain relatively constant from age 25 through to age 55. In other words, the majority of women continue to work in the paid labour force throughout their child-rearing years.

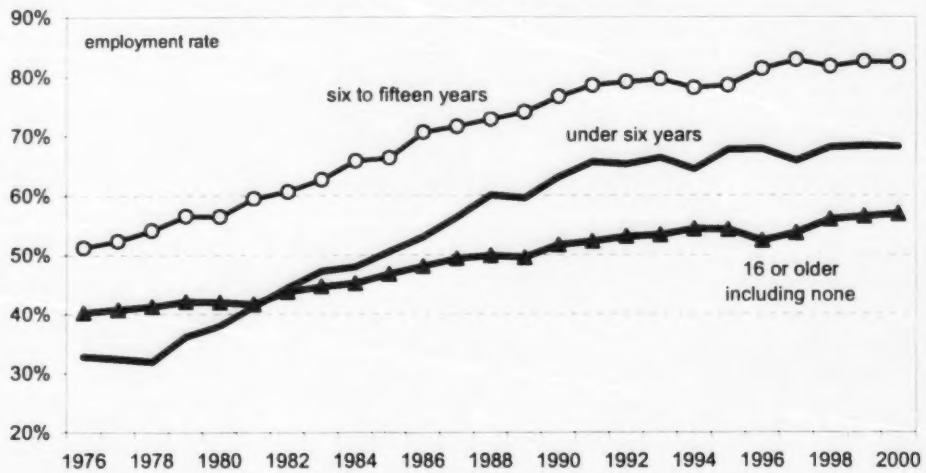
Figure 1: Employment in Saskatchewan by Gender, 1976 to 2000

Figure 2: Employment Rate for Saskatchewan Women, by Age Group, 1980 and 2000



Looked at another way, the employment rate for women with children under the age of six at home (excluding lone parents) has more than doubled from 33% in 1976 to 68% in 2000 (see Figure 3). There are also substantial increases among women with school-aged children at home.

Figure 3: Employment Rate For Saskatchewan Women with Spouses, by Age of Youngest Child, 1976 to 2000



Employment by Industry and Occupation

The single largest industry group[1] where women work is the health and social services group. In 2000, 46,900 women were employed in this sector, more than one in five women with paid employment (see Figures 4 and 5). The second most common sector is the retail/wholesale trade group where 37,200 women worked in 2000.

As a percentage of total employment in the industry, women have, in comparison with men, a disproportionately high number of jobs in:

- health and social services (84% of employment in this industry group);
- education services (66%); and
- accommodation and food services (64%).

They have a disproportionately low number of jobs in many of the goods producing industries including:

- manufacturing and construction (13% of employment in this group); and
- the "other primary" group which includes forestry, mining, and energy (12%).

Figure 4: Employment by Industry Group, 2000

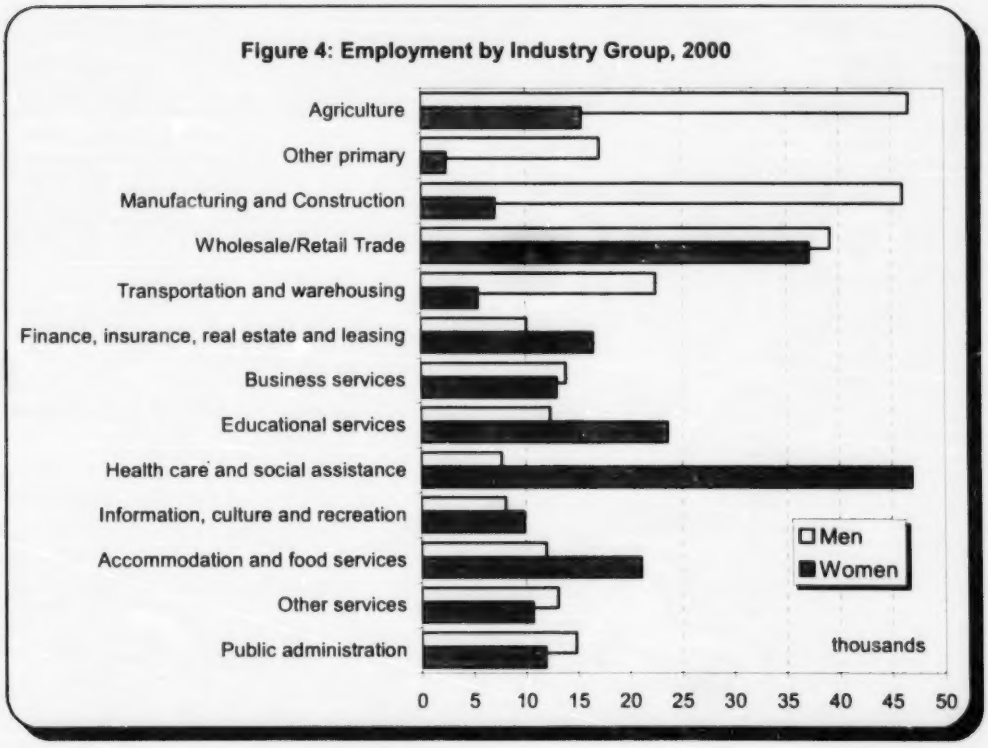
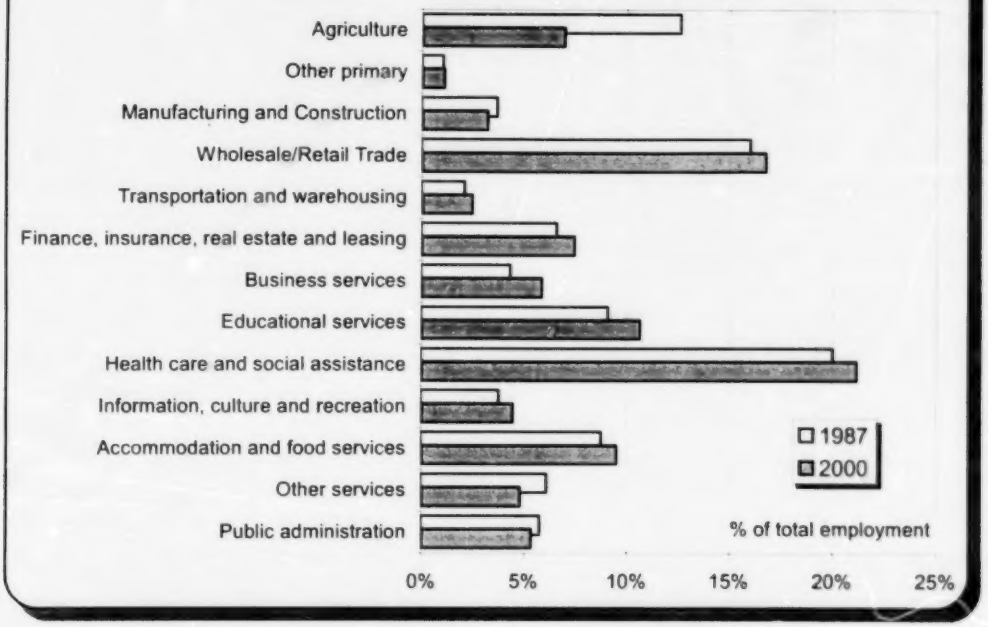


Figure 5: Employment by Industry Group, Saskatchewan Women



The industry distribution of employment has changed remarkably little since 1987, the earliest year for which industry data are available (see Figure 5). There are relatively fewer women working in agriculture and relatively more working in business services and education services than in 1987. Employment shares in the other industry groups have not changed appreciably in the past dozen years.

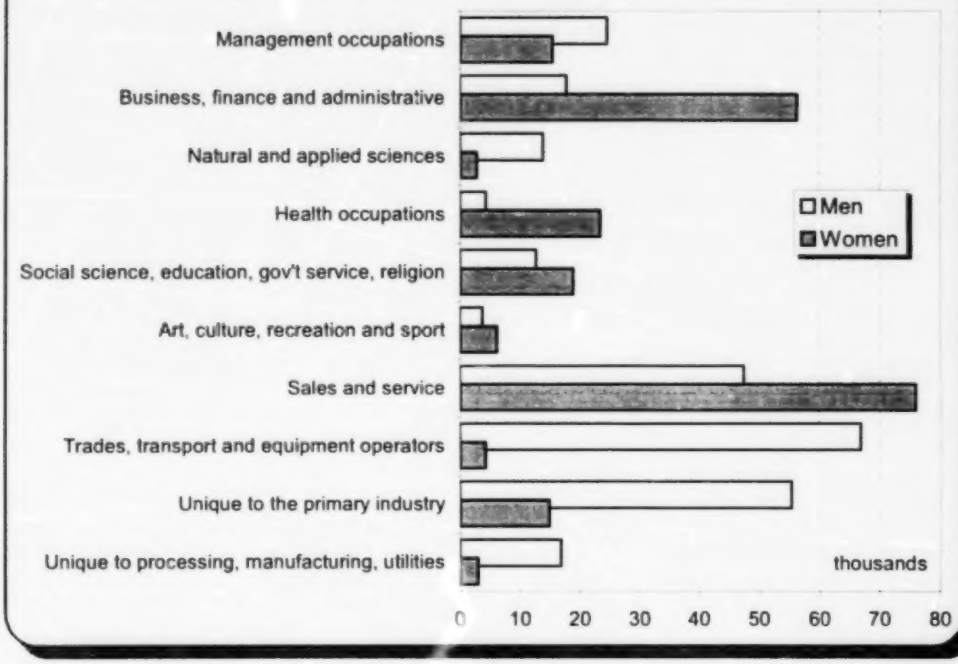
Figure 6 shows that, in terms of occupational groups, women have a disproportionately high number of jobs in:

- health occupations (85% of employment in this group);
- business, finance, and administrative occupations (76%);
- art, culture, recreation, and sport (63%); and
- sales and service occupations (62%).

Employment by Industry and Occupation

Statistics for employment in industry and occupation groups require careful interpretation. The industry group refers to the type of business in which the person is employed whereas the occupation group refers to their duties. Many occupation groups cross industry boundaries. In the retail trade industry group, for example, there are people in managerial occupations as well as people in sales occupations and service occupations.

Figure 6: Employment by Occupation Group, 2000

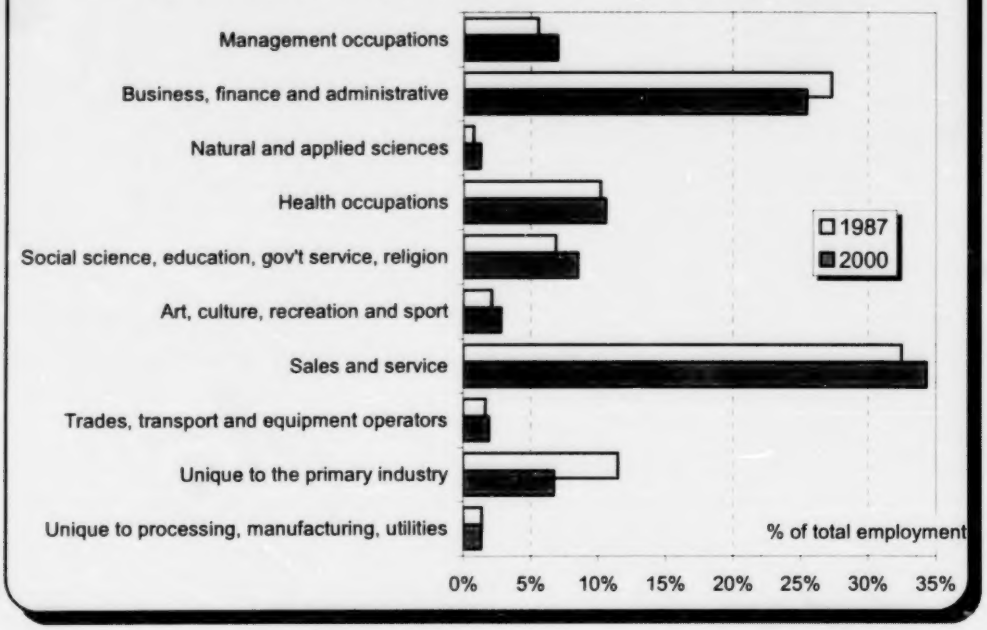


In the past 12 years, the proportion of women working in "occupations unique to the primary industry", a category that includes farmers, has declined (see Figure 7). There have been slight increases in the proportion of women in management jobs and in the sales and services occupation group. Employment in the so-called "blue collar" jobs remains low — only 6% of jobs in the "trades, transport, and equipment operators" group, for example, are held by women.

In general, women who work are more likely to be in public sector positions than in the private sector, especially self-employment. In 2000, 63% of public sector jobs were held by women. In the private sector, 44% of employees were women but only 32% of the self-employed (including farmers) were women.

At least partly because of the industry groups in which they work, women employees are somewhat more likely than their male counterparts to be union members. In 2000, 39% of women were union members compared with 32% of men.

Figure 7: Employment by Occupation Group, Saskatchewan Women

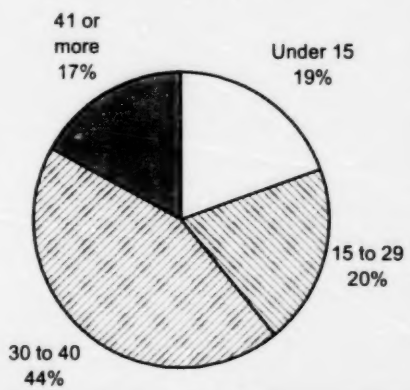


Hours of Work

Statistics Canada classifies a person as a "part-time" employee if, for all jobs they hold, the weekly hours total less than 30. With this definition, 39% of women worked part-time in 2000 compared with 20% of men (see Figure 8).

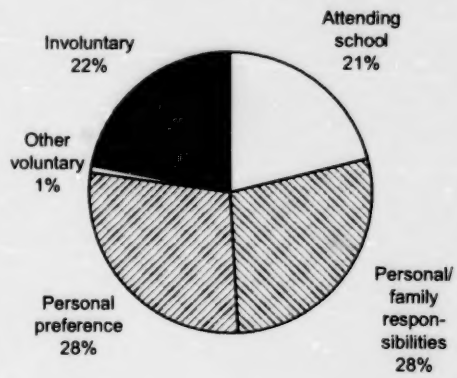
These proportions have been effectively constant over the past two decades. Nevertheless, the average hours worked per week has increased because more women are working longer (41 or more) hours. The average hours worked per week was 33½ hours in 2000 compared with 31 hours in the mid 1980s.

Figure 8: Hours per Week, All Jobs, Saskatchewan Women, 2000



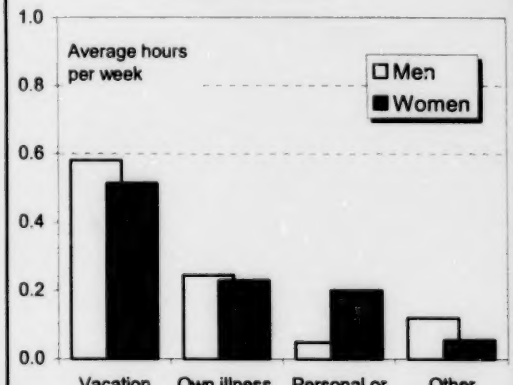
Women have a variety of reasons for working part-time. In 2000, personal or family responsibilities including the care of children was the reason for more than one in four women who worked part-time (see Figure 9). Another 28% worked part-time as a matter of personal preference while 21% did so because they were going to school. Just under one in four (22%) was working part-time because they couldn't find full-time work.

Figure 9: Reasons for Working Part-Time, Saskatchewan Women, 2000



The Labour Force Survey also asks those who are working full-time if they lost time from work and, if so, why. In 2000, men and women full-time employees both lost an average of 1.0 hours per week, but the reasons were different (see Figure 10). Women were somewhat more likely to lose time because of personal or family responsibilities whereas men were more likely to lose time for vacations and "other" reasons.

Figure 10: Time Lost from Work, Full-Time Employees, 2000



Tenure and Job Type

In 2000, three-quarters of Saskatchewan women who were employed were in a permanent, paid position (see Figure 11). The majority of the remaining 26% were either self-employed (16%) or in temporary paid positions (10%).

Compared with men, women were more likely to be in paid employment and less likely to be self-employed.

Job tenure is defined by Statistics Canada to be employment with

the same employer regardless of changes in occupations within the firm. The percentage of women with at least five years of job tenure increased during the 1980s and early 1990s, from 33% in 1981 to 48% in 1994 (see Figure 12). Since then, the proportion has levelled off. Corresponding with that increase is a general decline in the proportion of women with less than five years of job tenure.

Men generally have longer tenure than women. In 2000, for example, the average tenure was 11 years for men compared with 8 years for women.

Figure 11: Employment Type, Saskatchewan Women, 2000

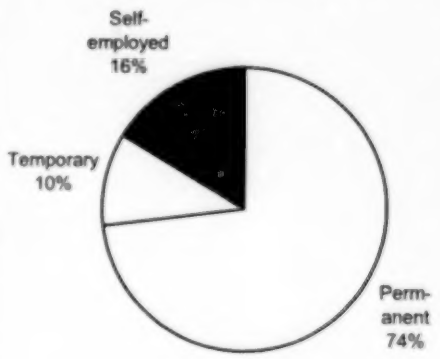
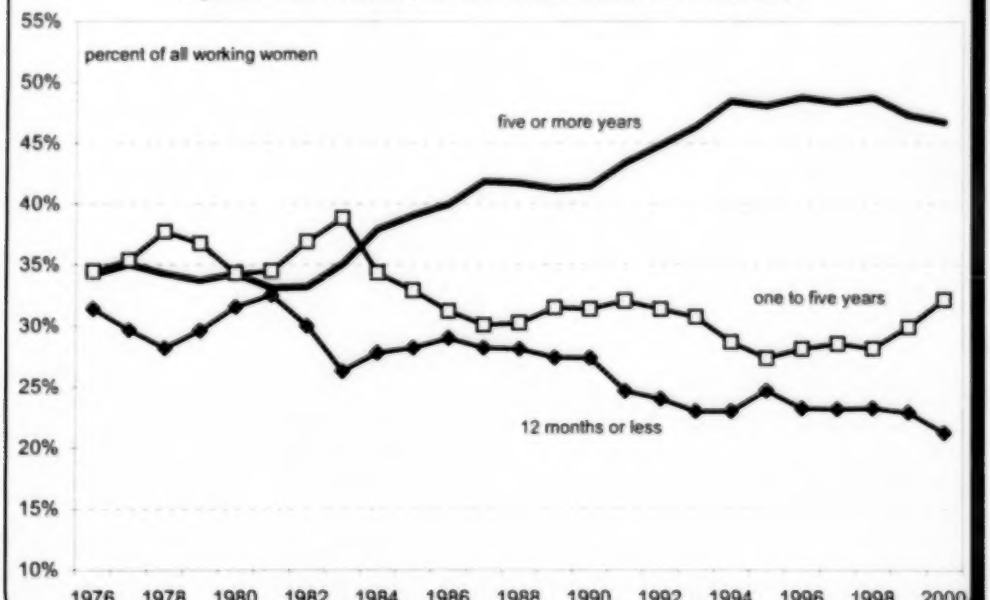


Figure 12: Job Tenure, Saskatchewan Women, 1976 to 2000

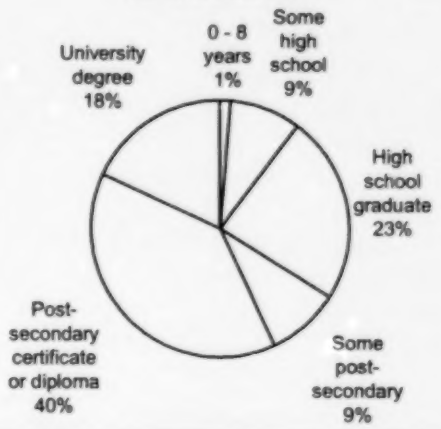


Educational Attainment

Women with higher levels of formal education[2] are more likely to be employed than those with lower levels, and the gap is widening.

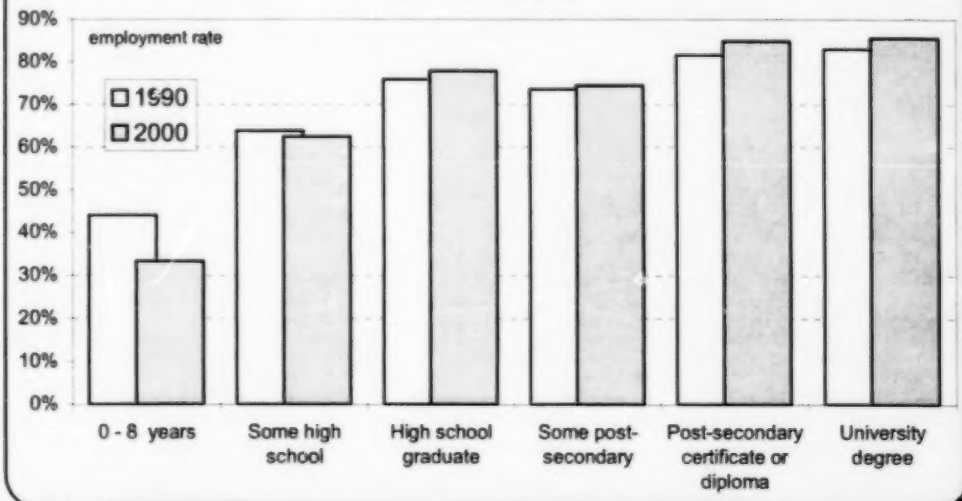
These statistics exclude those who may still be in school (15 to 24 years of age) and older women who were less likely to complete high school. Two-thirds of the employed women in this age group have at least some post-secondary education (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Completed Education Level, Employed Women, 25 to 54 Years of Age, 2000


University degree 18%
0 - 8 years 1%
Some high school 9%
High school graduate 23%
Some post-secondary 9%
Post-secondary certificate or diploma 40%

In 2000, more than 80% of women who are post-secondary graduates were employed (see Figure 14). This compares with 33% of women with less than Grade 9 and 62% of women with an incomplete high school education. Over the 1990s, the employment rate increased for all women with at least a high school education whereas it decreased for those with lower levels of completed education.

Figure 14: Employment Rate, Saskatchewan Women 25 to 54 Years of Age, 1990 and 2000



Income from Employment

On average, 71% of women had at least some income from employment in 1998[3]. The average income (among those with employment income) was $18,000 for women, compared with $27,780 for men. Median employment income for women was $15,000, compared with $23,140 for men. (Median income is the income midpoint at which one-half of the individuals are below and the other half above.)

Figure 15 shows the distribution of employment income for men and women in 1998. There are a significantly higher proportion of women in each of the income categories below $25,000 per year. One-half of women, compared with 35% of men have incomes under $15,000 per year. The proportion hasn't changed substantially in the past 10 years.

A relatively high proportion of women work in jobs that are either part-time or seasonal and this has an impact on their employment income. In 1998, for example, 42% of women worked the entire year on a full-time basis (referred to as full-time, full-year workers) compared with 55% of men.

Figure 15: Distribution of Income from Employment, 1998

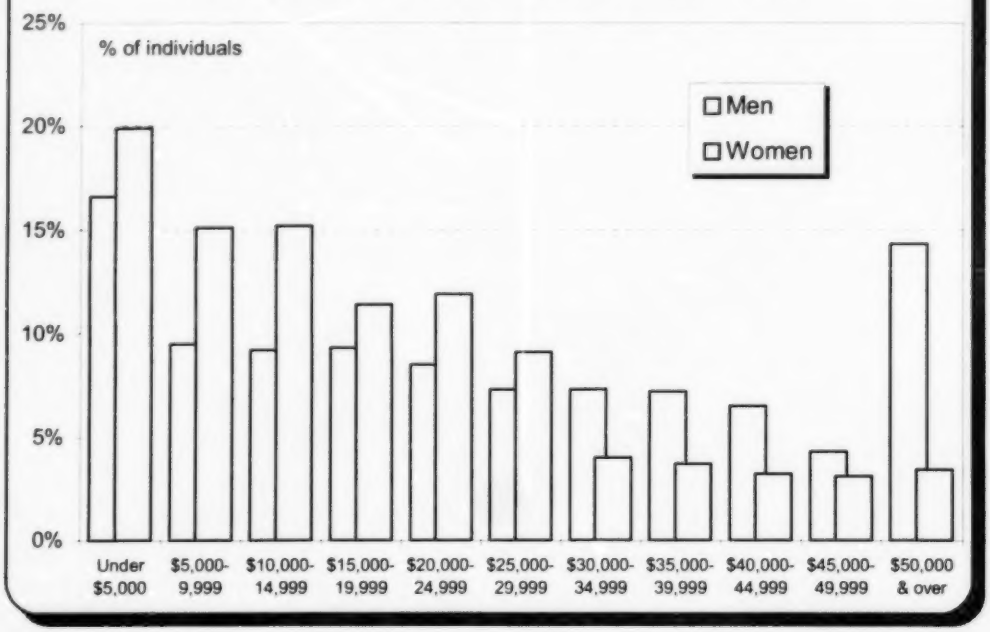
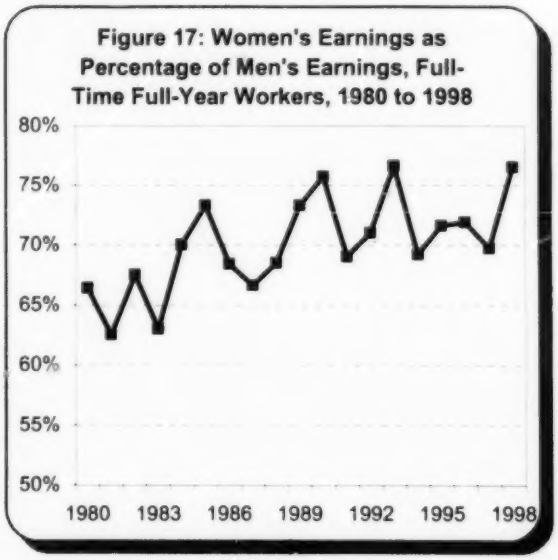


Figure 16 shows that the proportion of women working full-time full-year has increased since 1980 reaching a high of 48% in the early 1990s but has since fallen back to 42%. Their average incomes have shown the opposite pattern, declining to $24,000 per year in 1987 before increasing to $27,470 in 1998.



Employment income inequality is typically measured using average earnings for women and men who work on a full-time, full-year basis. Figure 17 shows that, over the long term, the earnings gap between men and women is closing, albeit it at a slow pace. In 1998, women working on a full-time, full-year basis were earning 77% of what

men working on a full-time, full-year basis were earning. This compares with 69% in 1988 and 66% in 1980.

Wage Rates

Statistics Canada has recently added wage rates to the Labour Force Survey. These wage rates, which exclude the self-employed, represent gross hourly wage rates before tips, commissions, and bonuses.

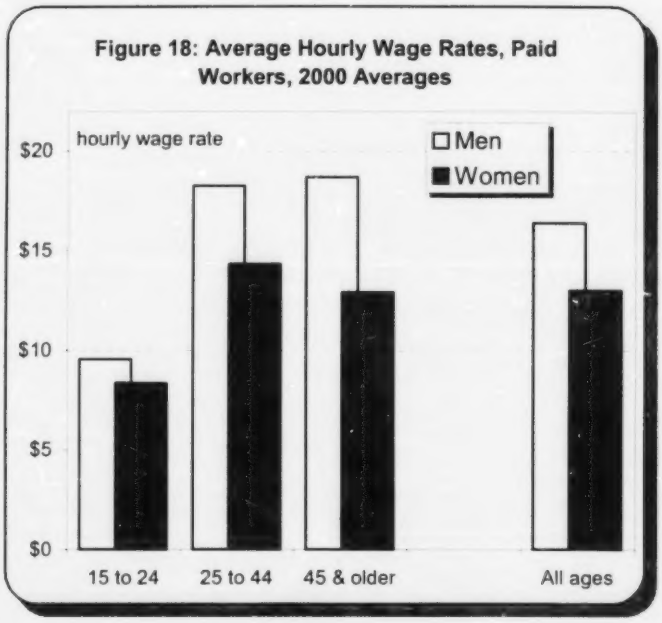


Figure 18: Average Hourly Wage Rates, Paid Workers, 2000 Averages

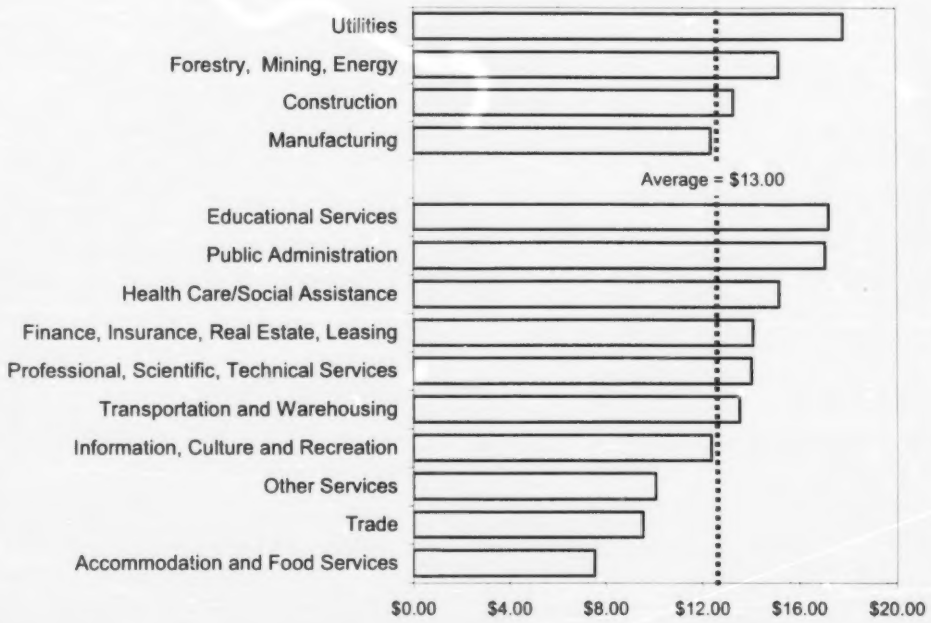
The data indicate that there is still a substantial difference in wage rates between men and women, particularly for employees in older age groups (see Figure 18).

Overall, women earn an average of $13.00 per hour. This represents 79% of the male average of $16.38 per hour. The difference is higher for women 45 years of older – $12.90 compared with $18.69 – than it is for women ages 15 to 24 – $8.34 compared with $9.54.

Figure 19 shows that the relatively few women working in the "utility" industry group had the highest average wage rate in 2000 ($17.85 per hour). The lowest wage rates were in the accommodation and food services sector where the average rate was $7.52.

The differential between women and men is highest in the "professional, scientific, and technical services" group where women earn 67% of what mean earn. The differential is lowest in accommodation and food services where women earn 96% of what men earn.

Figure 19: Average Hourly Wage Rates for Paid Employees, Saskatchewan Women, by Industry Group, 2000



Other Labour Force Indicators

Some other facts about women in the Saskatchewan labour force during 2000 are presented below.

- The unemployment rate for women was lower than for men – 5.4% compared with 6.6%.
- In Regina 49% of persons working are women, compared with 46% in Saskatoon and 44% outside the two major cities.
- Excluding the self-employed, almost one-half (45%) of women work in firms with fewer than 20 employees.
- In an average week, 15% of women work overtime and in two-thirds of the cases it was unpaid overtime.
- One in every ten (10%) women in the paid labour force holds two or more jobs simultaneously.

Notes

Source: Unless otherwise specified, these data are derived from the Statistics Canada monthly Labour Force Survey. This is a telephone survey of approximately 4,000 households in the province representing about 7,500 adults. For a variety of reasons including jurisdictional issues, costs, and response rates, the LFS survey framework excludes the population normally resident on Reserve. The survey includes the Aboriginal population living off Reserve in its survey frame.

1. *Employment by industry and occupation is for the main job only.*

2. *The term "education" used in this statistical update refers only to education received from an educational institution, including institutions in other provinces or countries. On the job and other specific skills training is not included. In the hierarchy of educational attainment used by Statistics Canada a completed course is always considered as "higher" than an incomplete course. University degrees are considered as higher than certificates or diplomas which are, in turn, considered higher than graduation from secondary school. An apprenticeship trade certificate is considered as equivalent to other kinds of certificates/diplomas. Note that some university programs yield certificates/diplomas rather than degrees.*

3. *The data in the "Income from Employment" section are derived from two separate household surveys conducted by Statistics Canada: the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) and the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID). Data prior to 1996 are drawn from the SCF and data since 1996 are taken from SLID. Employment income is gross income before taxes and other deductions and can be derived from either self-employment or paid employment or both. All income figures are adjusted for inflation, that is, they are measured in constant 1998 dollars.*